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NSC STAFF FOR PASCUAL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/22/2018
TAGS: PREL PHUM KDEM EG
SUBJECT: REPORT ON EGYPTIAN DISSIDENT'S HEALTH APPARENTLY
INACCURATE

REF: A. CAIRO 976
1B. CAIRO 1565

Classified By: Counselor for Economic and Political Affairs
Catherine Hill-Herndon for Reason 1.4(d).

1.(SBU) The Cairo independent newspaper Al Masry Al Youm reported on September 21 that imprisoned opposition politician Ayman Nour was suffering from a blood clot in his leg. According to the report, which cited Nour's wife Gameela Ismail as its source, prison authorities offered to transport Nour to a hospital in a "lorry" for treatment, but he declined as he believed that transportation in a "lorry" could aggravate his condition.

2.(C) We met twice in recent days with Gameela Ismail as she prepared to travel to New York to participate in a September 23 lunch hosted by President Bush. Ms. Ismail, who departed yesterday for the U.S., did not mention to us any problem with Nour's health, although she did tell us that she was worried that the GoE would use her impending meeting with President Bush "against her." We, therefore, contacted Nour's long-time lawyer Amir Salem to ask about the report. Salem told us the report was inaccurate and said he did not believe Nour was suffering from a blood clot. Salem has told us previously that Nour exaggerated his health problems (ref B) and he believed that is also the case with the blood clot report.

3.(C) Comment: Gameela Ismail has not been shy in the past about bringing to our attention Nour's health problems. Given our multiple meetings and conversations with her in recent days, we are confident she would have alerted us if there were any cause for concern.

SCOBAY